

based upon creation's relative participation in its source' (p. 154). At this point it is somewhat unclear how this pneumatological mediation avoids the problem of triumphalism, since configurations of socio-political power make it possible for certain individuals or groups to claim 'strong' christological presence and participation in order to justify their own interests, or 'weak' christological presence and participation among those they wish to exclude.

Jantzen concludes the text by applying his pneumatological conception of providence to discern the Spirit at work in making Christ present in and through human efforts to resist racialised practices of gentrification in the city of Durham, North Carolina.

Jantzen's commendable contribution might be complemented or expanded upon in at least one major direction. His pneumatological conception of providence would benefit from constructive dialogue with the ecclesial community for whom this doctrinal perspective is perhaps most characteristic: Pentecostals. Especially considering Jantzen's discussion of Spirit-initiated cross-class and cross-racial communities of solidarity and non-statist democratic participation, black US Pentecostalism seems an obvious interlocutor.

In the end, Jantzen's book follows in the footsteps of texts such as Willie James Jennings' *The Christian Imagination* and J. Kameron Carter's *Race: A Theological Account*. If Jennings' diagnosis of a deformed doctrine of creation and Carter's diagnosis of a pseudo-theological anthropology of race represent critical-constructive accounts of the doctrines of the first and second persons of the Godhead, respectively, then Jantzen's pneumatological conception of providence completes a trinitarian offensive against modern racial reasoning.

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Pieter Vos, *Longing for the Good Life: Virtue Ethics After Protestantism*

(London: Bloomsbury, 2020), pp. 224. £90.00/\$115.00

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Vos investigates how Protestantism 'relates to the long and multifaceted tradition of virtue ethics' and how this inheritance might 'contribute to the development of a viable contemporary virtue ethics' (p. 1). These objectives are pursued over eight chapters, which give the reader much to ponder.

The first two chapters attend to several preliminary issues. Chapter 1 introduces the virtue tradition with reference to Aristotle, then turning to its reception by Augustine. In this exploration the more modern 'philosophy of the art of living' (with its provenance in Foucault) is used as a foil and is forcefully critiqued. Chapter 2 further plumbs Augustine's thought in conversation with Nicholas Wolterstorff. For Wolterstorff, Augustine causes a decisive break with eudaimonism; Vos disagrees. He persuasively

argues that Augustine does not in fact disavow eudaimonism but instead ‘transforms it’ in a manner which enables a broadened ‘conception of the good life and the virtues as fully encompassing the good of the other’ (p. 42).

The next three chapters probe the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestant reception of the virtue paradigm, beginning in chapter 3 with a study of Calvin. Chapter 4 turns to a selection of less-studied Reformed scholastics, such as Daneau, Keckermann, Walaeus and Ames. While enlightening, these examinations at times elicit confusion. For instance, I found myself wondering about the precise difference between Daneau’s ethical philosophising ‘from the Word of God’ and theological ethics proper, which Vos associates with Ames (see pp. 93–104). Nevertheless, a seminal achievement of these chapters is to deconstruct Alastair MacIntyre’s and Brad Gregory’s claim that the Reformation radically eschewed a teleological view of life and a virtue approach to ethics. Compelling evidence is marshalled to counter this evaluation.

Chapter 5 engages with Kierkegaard, whose relationship with virtue has also been misapprehended, according to Vos. Whereas MacIntyre depicts Kierkegaard as a culprit in the rise of ‘emotivism’, Vos perceptively demonstrates the pervasive, if sometimes subtle, virtue orientation of Kierkegaard’s theory of edification.

With debts to the preceding discussions, the final three chapters constructively contemplate what the Protestant legacy offers to contemporary virtue ethics. Chapter 6 ruminates on the ‘kind of exemplarity’ that is implied by ‘a Protestant understanding of *imitatio*’ (p. 133). Such exemplarity is concerned not with copying Christ’s example so much as with coming to resemble Christ in one’s own particular life. Mindful of Protestant hamartiology, in chapter 7 Vos takes exception to the doctrine of the unity of the virtues in commending a soberer, non-perfectionistic account virtuosity. Although we can grow morally, we are always ‘flawed saints’ (p. 152). Chapter 8 builds on this theme, with an eye to how ordinary people might exemplify virtues for one another. Here, Vos unveils a twofold distinction: humans can serve as ‘role exemplars’ and as ‘existential exemplars’ (pp. 187–9). If this helpful schematic is to gain traction, further elaboration will be necessary.

I finished the book with a few small questions. Some are more historical, such as how exactly Calvin’s notion (or virtue) of *moderatio* – which is interpreted as inviting creativity and dynamism with respect to our selfhood – squares with his robust affirmation that society has a fixed order ‘rooted in creation’ (p. 78). I also wonder how that pillar of Protestant soteriology, the doctrine of justification by faith, might positively contribute to current theories of virtue. Engagement with this doctrine is minimal, apart from the project’s startling assertion that it is not ‘opposed to the concept of *gratia infusa* as effecting a habitual change in man’ (p. 10). Thirdly, while I welcome Vos’s emphasis on learning virtue from imperfect exemplars (cf. Luke 16:1–8), I wonder about the present willingness to do this. After all, within so-called ‘cancel culture’ one vice easily covers over whatever virtues a person might otherwise exhibit. Are we ready to let (even sometimes deeply) flawed saints guide us towards virtue? Finally, and concerning structure, the book would have benefited from a conclusion, given the considerable ground it covers. More systematically oriented readers will undoubtedly want to see the project’s various themes woven together in a succinct summation.

Such qualms aside, the volume is an excellent example of retrieval. Vos’s engagement with the sources adds to the efforts of Manfred Svensson and David Sytsma to clarify the place of virtue in classical Protestantism. In so doing, he places another nail in the coffin of the MacIntyre-Gregory thesis about the abandonment of eudaimonism in the Reformation. Further, in his constructive proposals, Vos adeptly upends Jennifer

Herd't's claim (see pp. 133–6) that the hyper-Augustinian tenor of classical Protestant soteriology is inimical to thinking through habitation in virtue for character development. In all of this, he makes great strides in reconnecting Protestant ethics to the wider Christian tradition.

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Shao Kai Tseng, *Karl Barth*

(Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2021), pp. xxiii +225. \$15.99

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Shao Kai Tseng's study of Karl Barth in the *Great Thinkers* series joins the chorus of texts that examine the theology of the Swiss theologian. This series approaches the introductory task by critically assessing the seminal thoughts of these thinkers through an analysis of primary source material and a keen awareness of their historical contexts. The goal is to provide a 'rich theological assessment and response from a Reformed perspective' (p. ix). The series is pitched at an evangelical Reformed audience, and while it is not the author's intent to proselytise evangelicals to 'Barthianism', one of his stated goals is to convince evangelical readers that many things can be learned from Barth and Barthians. Tseng sets about this task over the course of three chapters, and, in similar design to the previous two instalments by the same author in this series (on G. W. F. Hegel and Immanuel Kant), he outlines his subject matter by looking first at why Barth matters today, then moves to a summary of Barth's theology, and finally concludes with a chapter that provides a Reformed assessment of Barth.

Tseng begins the first chapter by situating Barth's theology on a broad theological spectrum that ranges from postliberalism, *nouvelle théologie* and Eastern Orthodoxy to evangelical theology. A significant contribution that this compelling book makes to the field of Barth studies is Tseng's description of the global reception of Barth. Not only does Tseng concisely detail the European and American engagement with Barth, but it is the lucid and accessible way that he also portrays the Sinophone reception of Barth that expands the horizon of Barth's influence.

The second chapter opens with a call for a fresh evangelical reinterpretation of Barth. Tseng ably demonstrates how early interpretations of Barth by Cornelius Van Til and Carl Henry, among others, have clouded the vision for evangelicals to clearly perceive Barth's theology. Embarking on a reappraisal of Barth's thought, our author employs George Hunsinger's hermeneutic by exploring Barth's theology through four major motifs, namely, 'actualism', 'particularism', 'objectivism' and 'personalism'. From this theological basis, Tseng leads the reader through a section that serves to challenge and correct ten commonly held 'evangelical myths' about Barth's theology.

This is a helpful section, in which Tseng attempts to dismantle faulty claims about Barth's theology that have been attached to, and subsequently hampered by, an